

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville P.O. 1600 Huntsville, AL 35807-4301

## **News Release**

Number: 03-05 Huntsville Engineering and Support Center Announces

Privatization of Utilities at Ft. Bragg, N.C.

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Huntsville, Ala.— The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville, Ala., has announced that the electric utility system at Fort Bragg, N.C., will privatize in February of this year. Privatization is the process of transferring ownership, operations and maintenance of the Government's utility system in order to free up resources (money and manpower); take advantage of available technology from the private sector; and allow the military to concentrate more on its core functions.

Sandhills Utility Services, LLC (SUS) was selected to own and operate the Fort Bragg system consisting of approximately 411 miles of conductor, 9,595 poles, 2,259 transformers, 5,739 streetlights, and approximately 10,000 services users.

SUS is a company formed by five electrical membership cooperatives (EMCs) to provide the service to Fort Bragg. The EMCs are located and provide services in the area around the military installation. The partners in SUS are Lumbee River EMC, South River EMC, Pee Dee River EMC, Central EMC, and North Carolina EMC. Each EMC has over 60 years experience in all aspects of electrical distribution system work.

The Savannah District provided environmental and real estate support. They created environmental documents that supported the action to execute the transfer of the Army real property from Federal to private ownership. Easement access rights for the contractor was coordinated with the Air Force and Army as the utility system serves both Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Huntsville, Ala. modeled the effort after private sector practices. Huntsville Center partnered with Sandhills to exchange information and perspectives about the site. "Privatization is a unique arrangement in which both the Government and the contractor are winners, reducing costs of operation, while improving services to the installation," said Curt Murdock, Huntsville Center Privatization Program Manager.

"This project is another example of Huntsville Center's innovative engineering solutions that will provide significant cost savings to the government and improved service to customers," said Dan Coberly, Public Affairs Officer for Huntsville Center.

The process at Fort Bragg began with the solicitation in February 2000, with first negotiations beginning in July of 2000.

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